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ABSTRACT

A content analysis of white-oriented and black-oriented Milwaukee, Wisconsin, newspaper coverage of that city's racial riots in 1967 was conducted to test the following hypotheses: (1) the general media would rely more on "authority" sources, while the specialized black media would rely more on "nonauthority" sources; (2) the general media would contain more factual information while the black media would contain more analytical information; (3) general media would more likely relate causes to individuals' behavior while the black media would relate causes to societal behavior; and (4) the general media would more likely relate cures to individuals' behavior while the black media would relate cures to societal behavior. The results supported all four hypotheses, indicating that racial conflict coverage differed among the black and generalized media in accordance with their reliance on different sources. Neither general nor specialized black media provided a balance of white and black perspectives approaching journalistic "objectivity." The results suggest that if black Milwaukeans were frustrated in communicating their reasons for the racial conflict and riot, and if white Milwaukeans were deceived as to the nature and extent of black discontent, then the media may have fostered dangerous discord. (HTH)

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MEDIA PERFORMANCE AT THE INFLECTION POINT:

COVERAGE OF RACIAL CONFLICT

IN MILWAUKEE IN 1967

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December, 1982

CS 207684

MEDIA PERFORMANCE AT THE INFLECTION POINT:

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IN MILWAUKEE IN 1967

Social conflict merits more media coverage than does any other topic, and coverage is the means by which media manage conflict. Urban riots occurred in more than 100 U.S. inner cities in the latter 1960s to a peak in 1967, and hit 100 more cities before the decade ended. Media coverage of urban riots increased dramatically in the 1960s, also peaking in 1967 (Funkhouser, 1973). The U.S. in the 1960s was a nation "moving toward two societies, one black, one white--separate and unequal" (U.S. National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, hereafter the Kerner Commission, 1968: 1). In 1967, the nation was served by separate media serving a separating society. The black media were unequal to their white competition in circulation and resources. They may not have been unequal to the task of reporting on riots which occurred in their inner cities.

The roles of white and black media differed because the factors contributing to role definitions differed: cultural and organizational constraints. Roshco (1975) states that the structure of society must change for its definition of news to change. In one nation becoming two societies by the 1960s, the general and specialized black media had different definitions of news. Of course, the majority society and its institutions, including the general media, were changing. But they were not changing swiftly enough for many blacks.

Statement of the Problem

In 1967 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, media coverage of urban riots increased dramatically as the social conflict of the '60s hit home. Confrontations between blacks and whites in Milwaukee began in spring. Tensions erupted July 30-31 into an urban riot which took three lives, injured 70 persons, caused 1,740 arrests and $500,000 in property damage, and kept the city at a standstill during 10 days of curfew (Aukofer, 1968; Schmandt, 1971). Further confrontations continued into fall. Both print and broadcast media in Milwaukee faced the task of managing social conflict in their city. Broadcast media were all under white ownership and, with the exception of one radio station, were white-oriented. Print media, however, reflected the racial composition of the social conflict.

Reporting on tensions surrounding the riot of July 30-31, 1967 was the task of Milwaukee print media serving the separate social strata: the general media including the white-oriented Milwaukee Journal and Milwaukee Sentinel, and the specialized media including the black-oriented Milwaukee Star and Milwaukee Courier. From April, 1967 through March, 1968, the Journal in its 86th year had a circulation averaging 371,562 daily and 566,177 Sundays, and the 130-year-old Sentinel's daily circulation averaged 167,973 (Audit Bureau of Circulation, 1968). The weekly Star, founded in 1961, claimed a circulation in 1967 of about 20,000, and the Courier which started in 1964 claimed a circulation of 12,000 (Jones, 1982). The Journal and Sentinel had predominantly white owners, readers, editors and reporters while the Star and Courier had predominantly black ownership, readership and personnel. The racial orientations of these four Milwaukee newspapers when the city's riot occurred in 1967 offer an opportunity to examine media management of social conflict. If external and internal orientations, white and black, influenced the organizational practices of the

Journal, Sentinel, Star and Courier, then general and specialized black media differed in their management of social conflict in Milwaukee in 1967.

Conflict and communication have been studied extensively by Donohue, Olien, Rodenkirchen and Tichenor. Their work provided a theoretical basis for this study. In an overview of communication research, Tichenor, et al. (1973: 425) found it "curious that conflict is rarely treated as a variable or a condition, especially at the community or other system level." They suggested that this may be because research rarely focuses on "information gain" and concluded that "Conflict is managed in different social systems in different ways, and mass media are instrumental in this management . . . . The nature of these systems, the media subsystems, and the function of conflict should be raised for new examination." They hypothesized, first, that mass media cause a "knowledge gap" between social strata--the higher the socioeconomic class, the more knowledgeable--on national issues (Tichenor, Donohue and Olien, 1970). Then they differentiated between types of "knowledge." "Knowledge of" issues and events occurs when media provide basic factual information but avoid or obscure tension-laden information. "Knowledge about" occurs when media provide analytical information and in-depth reporting of tension-laden information, such as underlying grievances requiring more than simple solutions (Donohue, Tichenor and Olien, 1972).

They then tested the "knowledge gap" hypothesis on local and regional examples of ecological issues in several Minnesota communities. There they determined that the "knowledge gap" between social classes was actually reduced rather than increased as media input increased, attributing the reversed effect to high interpersonal communication. Localized conflict accelerates communication between classes, they suggested, but only to a point--their hypothetical "point of inflection." "In polarized situations where rancorous

conflict erupts between radically extreme groups and points of view, the pattern . . . would not necessarily be expected to hold" (Tichenor, et al., 1973: 77). Beyond the inflection point, the flow of formal information through the mass media is likely to dissipate, and receivers' resistance to occur, in accommodation to the intensity of conflict. "This turning point," they suggest, "may occur when the conflict itself becomes the focal point of concern, taking priority over the initial issues" (Tichenor, et al., 1973: 46).

Milwaukee in the summer of 1967 was polarized by local racial conflict which resulted in a riot. It was a conflict which could provide an instance of the hypothetical inflection point which Tichenor, et al. did not find. Their studies measured knowledge on ecological issues, not racial issues. Therefore, they did not consider the possibility of different media serving different classes--"groups and points of view"--within the same community, reacting to and reporting on rancorous conflict quite differently. In Milwaukee in 1967, this study suggests, conflict between whites and blacks took priority for general media over the underlying causes. However, those issues continued to be the focal concern of specialized black media.

An important difference in perceptions between white and black Milwaukeeans was shown in two attitude surveys taken soon after the riot: Flaming's (1968) of 119 persons arrested for participating in the Milwaukee disorder, and Slesinger's (1968) of 387 randomly sampled Milwaukeeans who did not participate in the riot. Both studies showed that white Milwaukeeans--24 persons in Flaming's study and 259 in Slesinger's, totaling 283--stressed "outsiders coming into the city," "local civil rights leaders stirring up unrest" and "failure of parents to control their children" as the main causes of the riot. However, black Milwaukeeans--95 in Flaming's survey and 128 in Slesinger's for a total of 223--stressed poor police-community relations,

blocked job opportunities and blocked housing opportunities (thus, with Milwaukee's neighborhood school system then, also blocked educational opportunities) as riot causes. Regarding cures, to prevent a recurrence of riot, "The overwhelming majority of the white[s] . . . called for more police power, although the majority of the blacks believe this would not help at all, and may even be one of the causes of the riot," as Flaming summarized both surveys (1968: x-xi). Blacks called, instead, for more police protection--not power--and for grievance channels for better police-community relations. They called for more black police officers and for better jobs, housing and education. Slesinger's survey found that most whites said the events of July 30-31, 1967 constituted a "riot" while the majority of blacks saw the events as a "struggle for civil rights." To whites, it was an illogical and isolated incident in the city's history (Aukofer, 1968). To blacks, it was the inevitable result of the city's history of severe social and economic segregation (Still, 1948; Mayor's Study Committee on Social Problems of the Inner City, 1960; O'Reilly, 1965; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1967).

Tichenor, et al.'s "knowledge of" vs. "knowledge about" comparison is clearer when linked to the terms suggested by Flaming: individual and societal. "Knowledge of" is reporting simplistically on individuals' behavior, while "knowledge about" is the more difficult task of reporting analytically on complex societal behavior. "Knowledge of" reduces complex events to identifying individuals as aberrant and their actions as isolated. It is the easier reporting task and shows a media "institutional bias when it acts as a social critic . . . to expose individual malefactors rather than to attack social arrangements" (Roshco, 1975: 125). "Knowledge about" instead confronts complexities by identifying underlying societal causes for individuals' actions. It is a more difficult task--and less welcome to readers, who don't buy the

paper to be told they are to blame for the headlines.

This study could not replicate Tichenor, et al.'s methods of measuring a "knowledge gap" between social classes in 1967 because reporters, readers and rioters could not be systematically and reliably studied today regarding their "information gain" of 15 years ago. However, Slesinger's and Flaming's work provided useful indicators of attitudes at the time. Information imparted by the Journal, Sentinel, Star and Courier in the long, hot summer of 1967 could be measured through content analysis of their coverage. If different information was disseminated, the result may have been a "knowledge gap" between the general media's predominantly white audience and the specialized media's predominantly black audience at the inflection point of racial conflict.

The independent variable is the media: general media vs. specialized black media, the Journal and Sentinel vs. the Star and Courier. Literature on the media types gives reason to believe that their purposes, personnel and practices did differ, and these define the papers even beyond the racial differences in readership. The purposes of general media include fulfilling functions of objective surveillance, correlation, cultural transmission (Lasswell, 1948) and entertainment (Wright, 1959) and, especially in the community press, achieving commercial success (Janowitz, 1967). The specialized black media instead started--and still see themselves--as crusaders against racial conflict and for civil rights (Pride, 1951; Dann, 1971; Wolseley, 1971; LaBrie, 1977-78; Barrow, 1977-78; Nordin, 1977-78; Holt, 1981; Garland, 1982). Only rarely, and secondarily, have black papers achieved commercial success (Stevens, 1974).

Personnel of general and specialized black media also contrast strongly. A survey of 208 black papers in 1972 showed that only 10 percent of their personnel were white while almost two-thirds of black papers employed only

blacks (LaBrie, 1973). Almost a decade, a crucial decade, after the Kerner Commission (1968) called for racial representation in newsrooms, a survey of all media in 1976 showed that less than four percent of all newsworkers were black. Only about three percent of newsworkers in general media were black. Even the "journalistic elite" of the 25 top news organizations in the nation, including the Milwaukee Journal, had increased their proportion of black newsworkers to only three-and-a-half percent. None had blacks in supervisory positions (Johnstone, Slawski and Bowman, 1976). In 1967, the Star and Courier staffs were predominantly, but not exclusively, black (Jones, 1982). The Journal had one black reporter and a black student intern. The Sentinel had neither, but apparently commissioned black copyboys as "parareporters" during the riot (Caspari, 1980).

Compounding, perhaps even resulting from, cultural constraints are organizational constraints such as "routinizing" news (Tuchman, 1973, 1978) and event-oriented coverage (Molotch and Lester, 1974). Organizational constraints are often implicit in general media "policy" (Breed, 1955). However, some papers made policy explicit through written guidelines for riot coverage, established in at least 11 cities in cooperation with police and the Justice Department (Epstein, 1971), partially as a middle-class reaction to riot (Paletz and Dunn, 1967).

The general and specialized black media's differing roles, and differing organizational and cultural constraints, provide the dependent variable: reliance on sources, and perception of causes of and cures for conflict. If media differed in sources and perceptions, then general media provided "knowledge of" issues and events while specialized black media provided "knowledge about" racial conflict. These differences could be shown by measuring reliance on "authority" vs. "nonauthority" sources, and reporting of attitudes about racial

conflict as found by Slesinger and Flaming. Content analysis was expected to show general media reliance on "authority" sources, especially police (Molotch and Lester, 1974; Sherizen, 1978) with whom they share middle-class attitudes (McQuail, 1977). This practice could be deceptive and distorting in racial conflict and riot, automatically a "police beat" story due to personal injury and property damage. Yet police-black community hostility was one of the major causes of riots (Lieberson and Silverman, 1965; Conant, 1968; Fogelson, 1968; Caplan and Paige, 1968) and police beat reporters are especially prone to adopting their sources' outlook (Sherizen, 1978). Conversely, content analysis was expected to show the specialized black media's reliance on "nonauthority" sources, especially black residents who were both "principal participants" and "principal victims" of riot (Kerner Commission, 1968). This difference in sources would be due to the black community's aversion to police contact--especially in Milwaukee (Toliver and Himden, 1960; Flaming, 1968)--and to the specialized media's greater potential for understanding the black community, its perspective and representatives.

Finally, content analysis was also expected to show differing perceptions by general and specialized black media of "causes" and "cures," based on Slesinger's and Flaming's surveys taken soon after the riot. Whites perceived individuals as both the causes of and cures for riot, while blacks perceived societal reasons for riot and called for societal resolution. These terms, then, rather than "black" and "white," were used in the statement of hypotheses tested. They are:

H_1: General media will rely more on "authority" sources than will specialized black media.

H_2: Specialized black media will rely more on "nonauthority" sources than will general media.

H_3: General media will contain more factual information--"knowledge of"--than will specialized black media.

H_4: Specialized black media will contain more analytical information--"knowledge about"--than will general media.

H_5: General media will more likely relate causes to individuals' behavior than will specialized black media.

H_6: Specialized black media will more likely relate causes to societal behavior than will general media.

H_7: General media will more likely relate cures to individuals' behavior than will specialized black media.

H_8: Specialized black media will more likely relate cures to societal behavior than will general media.

Methods

Initial research strategy for content analysis called for a systematic probability sample of the Journal, Sentinel, Star and Courier from May through October, 1967 to include three months before and three months after the July 30-31 riot as well as immediate postriot coverage. This was expected to yield 26 issues from each of the four papers, one a week. However, both the Star and Courier had personnel situations so precarious that the departure of one crucial staff member could have a disastrous effect--and did. The Star until August, 1967 had been superior in size and quality to the Courier. With the resignation of its associate publisher and editor after the riot, the Star faltered for almost a month, with no local hard news stories until mid-September. So, the time span for sampling was extended back into April for a total sample of 31 issues each. Five issues of each weekly paper were then eliminated due to lack of local coverage or, in one case, lack of an entire issue on file, and at random, to achieve samples of 26 issues each.

The Star and Courier published weekly, on Saturdays, while the Journal published daily and the Sentinel published daily except Sundays. To account for variation in publication frequency and to avoid "natural rhythms"--a Sunday paper is always the largest (Budd, Thorp and Donohew, 1967)--interval rotation was used to select Journals and Sentinels weekly from April through October, 1967. For example, a Monday Journal was selected one week, a Tuesday Journal the next, and so on. "Next-day" postriot stories from the Journal and Sentinel were also included since the weekly Star and Courier samples automatically included immediate postriot coverage. This yielded samples of 27 Journals and 27 Sentinels. To achieve samples of 26 each, the first issues in April were discarded as least likely to anticipate later racial conflict.

Multiple editions also had to be accounted for, since the Journal and Sentinel each published four editions daily in 1967, serving the city and the state. The Star and Courier each published only one edition weekly. The city editions of the Journal and Sentinel were selected as most comparable to the inner-city circulation areas of the Courier and Star. The four papers also varied greatly in number of pages and, since the Star was then a tabloid, in page size. One Sunday's Journal could be almost as large as a week's Sentinels or a year's Stars or Couriers. Of issues sampled for this study, the Journal ranged from 30 to 322 pages and averaged 110. The Sentinel ranged from 28 to 82 pages and averaged 41. The Star ranged from 12 to 28 pages and averaged 16. The Courier ranged from 6 to 14 pages and averaged 8. These disparities, resulting in more units of observation in general media than in specialized black media, were normalized after sampling and coding.

In each of the 104 stories sampled, the most prominent news story pertaining to local racial conflict constituted a context unit. Corroboration of story selection was attempted for 28 issues, seven randomly chosen from each

of the four papers. Coder and reliability coder agreed on 23 of 28, or 82 percent, of stories selected. Further, a pretest of the four papers' immediate postriot lead stories indicated that context units and scales proposed for coding and comparison would result in valid and reliable data. The results also indicated that research as proposed would support the hypotheses. However, due to differences in journalistic style between general and specialized media, sentences were used as recording units instead of paragraphs as originally intended. Specialized black media deviated from "traditional" journalistic practice with paragraphs of as many as a dozen sentences. This compared to only one or two sentences per paragraph in general media. Sentences were far more comparable in length in both general and specialized black media, so were used as more appropriate units of observation.

Sentences were rated in eight scales correlating to hypotheses on a 0-1-2 basis, "0" indicating no pertinent information imparted, "1" indicating some information and "2" indicating more information. On coding sheets (see Appendix A), scales one through four indicated greater reliance on "authority" sourves, factual information and white Milwaukeeans' perceptions of individualized causes of and cures for local racial conflict. General media were expected to score higher in this area. Scales five through eight indicated greater reliance on "nonauthority" sources, analytical information and black Milwaukeeans' perceptions of individualized causes of and cures for local racial conflict. Specialized black media were expected to score higher in this area.

The first sentence, every tenth sentence following and the last sentence in each story were coded. The fewest sentences coded in any story was two--the first and last--while the most was 15. The 52 general media stories yielded 253 sentences (Journal, 135 and Sentinel, 118) for 56.2 percent of the total units of observation. The 52 specialized black media stories yielded 194

sentences (Star, 90 and Courier, 104) for 43.8 percent of the 447 units recorded. The reliability coder rated the same sentences from every other story, in chronological order from each newspaper, for a total of 52 stories. This yielded 127 sentences from general media (Journal, 70 and Sentinel, 57) and 106 sentences from specialized black media (Courier, 61 and Star, 45) for a total of 233 intercoded units of observation.

The reliability coder was not instructed on the theoretical basis, or on hypotheses stated, for this research. Instruction was necessary to explain some procedures. First, sentences were judged independent of surrounding information as much as possible but, when necessary, were read within the context of stories. For example, pronouns ("He said . . .") and the journalistic practice of last names in second reference ("Breier said . . .") occasionally required reference to preceding material. Second, the terms "authority" and "nonauthority" for sources caused confusion between "journalistic authority"--a source's inherent authority to sepak on a topic--and "societal authority" which was the interpretation intended in this study. The confusion was clarified for the reliability coder by using the terms "establishment" and "nonestablishment." Finally, both coder and reliability coder considered carefully, but did not reach prior agreement on, coding of crosscultural sources. For example, a white activist Catholic priest and a black alderwoman could have been coded as "authority" or "establishment" sources. However, both were "atypical spokespersons" (Epstein, 1971) in being regarded by all media as speaking for the "nonestablishment" black community.

Codings for 447 sentences by the coder and 233 by the reliability coder, for a total of 680 units of observation, were subjected to testing. Tests included t-tests of each scale, or variable, to control for sampling error; factor analysis of "knowledge of" and "knowledge about" scales to verify

patterns among variables; further t-tests of significant variables, or factors; and, crosstabulation of scores to investigate low intercoder reliability in some scales. Intercoding on 233, or 54 percent, of the 447 sentences showed that overall reliability was acceptable with an average Pearson correlation coefficient of .57 and an average proportion of agreement of .74 (table 1).

TABLE 1

INTERCODER RELIABILITY

	Pearson correlation coefficients	Proportion of agreement
"Authority" sources	.77*	.85
Factual information	.58*	.61
Individualized causes	.55*	.65
Individualized cures	.53*	.83
"Nonauthority" sources	.72*	.83
Analytical information	.19**	.64
Societal causes	.60*	.69
Societal cures	.64*	.81

*p<.001

**p<.002

These two measures of reliability, and others, were conducted because initial tests disclosed difficulty in measuring reliability on one scale, analytical information. The problem, simply stated, is that all media studied rarely attempted analysis of local racial conflict. This resulted in predominantly low ratings of "0" and "1" and few high ratings of "2" from both coder and reliability coder, a distortion which defied standard tests of

correlation. Excluding the scale on analytical information, the average of Pearson correlation coefficients on the other seven scales was a more acceptable .63. The test of proportion of agreement, possibly more useful for this study although less critical, shows that coder and reliability coder gave the same rating to the same sentence in each scale almost three-fourths of the time.

Results

Results of content analysis of systematically sampled coverage of local racial conflict by Milwaukee's Journal, Sentinel, Star and Courier from April through October in 1967 do support the hypotheses:

H_1: General media will rely more on "authority" sources than will specialized black media.

The Journal and Sentinel were far more likely to rely on "authority" sources than were the Star and Courier, with a mean score of .91 for general media as compared to .19 for specialized black media ($t_{445}=9.61$, $p<.001$). The headlines, although not part of tested data, do tell the story. The mayor's, police and National Guard perspectives were implicit in the Journal's banner headline of July 31, 1967 on the riot: "City Closed Off After Negro Rioting/ Maier Warns He'll Ask for U.S. Troops If Necessary/180 Seized;/Guardsmen/Called Out." However, the perspective of the Star's front-page headline August 5, 1967 on the riot was difference in source and denoted analysis: "Youth predicted/ Sunday's riot."

H_2: Specialized black media will rely more on "nonauthority" sources than will general media.

The Star and Courier were far more likely to rely on "nonauthority" sources than were the Journal and Sentinel, with a mean score of .94 for

specialized black media as compared to .22 for general media ($t_{445}=9.89$, $p<.001$). These means were almost exactly the reverse of those for use of "authority" sources, and use of sources provides the greatest measurable difference between media types. A relationship between types of sources used and perceptions of causes and cures is indicated by correlation coefficients (table 2).

TABLE 2

CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS OF SCALES*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	1.00	.11	.06	.22	-.39	-.10	-.22	-.06
2		1.00	.17	.23	-.28	-.41	-.22	-.26
3			1.00	.36	-.12	-.14	-.17	-.18
4				1.00	-.23	-.20	-.23	-.20
5					1.00	.28	.35	.11
6						1.00	.40	.30
7							1.00	.55
8								1.00

1 = "Authority" sources
2 = Factual information
3 = Individualized causes
4 = Individualized cures
5 = "Nonauthority" sources
6 = Analytical information
7 = Societal causes
8 = Societal cures

*$p<.001$

Correlation is evident among scales one through four, which correlate negatively with scales five through eight. Correlation is also evident among scales five through eight, which correlate negatively with scales one through four. Clearly, relying mainly on "authority" sources will ensure that mainly

"official" attitudes will be reported. Relying mainly on "nonauthority" sources will ensure that opposing viewpoints will dominate. Neither, obviously, approaches "objectivity."

H_3: General media will contain more factual information--"knowledge of"--than will specialized black media.

The Journal and Sentinel were somewhat more likely to contain factual information than were the Star and Courier, with a mean score of 1.57 for general media as compared to 1.27 for specialized black media ($t_{445}=4.61$, $p<.001$). These scores were the highest for both media types, indicating more emphasis on the "who, what, where and when" and less on "why and how."

H_4: Specialized black media will contain more analytical information--"knowledge about"--than will general media.

The Star and Courier were somewhat more likely to contain analytical information than were the Journal and Sentinel, with a mean score of .55 for specialized black media as compared to .25 for general media ($t_{445}=4.88$, $p<.001$). These means showed the least difference in performances of general and specialized black media. The Journal and Sentinel were slightly more "factual," the Star and Courier slightly more analytical--but the difference was not as significant as in other scales. Both media types obviously placed high emphasis on "just the facts," as could be expected. Neither media type placed much emphasis on analysis, as could also be expected--but regretted.

H_5: General media will more likely relate causes to individuals' behavior than will specialized black media.

The Journal and Sentinel were more likely to report individuals' behavior

as causes of conflict, similar to causes perceived by white Milwaukeeans surveyed in 1967, than were the Star and Courier, with a mean score of .87 for general media as compared to .38 for specialized black media ($t_{445}=6.13$, $p<.001$).

H_6: Specialized black media will more likely relate causes to societal behavior than will general media.

The Star and Courier were far more likely to report societal causes of conflict, similar to those perceived by black Milwaukeeans surveyed in 1967, than were the Journal and Sentinel, with a mean score of 1.09 for specialized black media as compared to .40 for general media ($t_{445}=9.00$, $p<.001$). The difference in mean scores in reporting societal causes is significant, second only to the difference between media types in reliance on sources.

H_7: General media will more likely relate cures to individual behavior than will specialized black media.

The Journal and Sentinel were somewhat more likely to report individualized cures for conflict, similar to those perceived by white Milwaukeeans, than were the Star and Courier, with a mean score of .48 for general media as compared to .13 for specialized black media ($t_{445}=5.54$, $p<.001$).

H_8: Specialized black media will more likely relate cures to societal behavior than will general media.

The Star and Courier were somewhat more likely to report societal cures for conflict, similar to those perceived by black Milwaukeeans, than were the Journal and Sentinel, with a mean score of .47 for specialized black media as compared to .23 for general media ($t_{445}=3.81$, $p<.001$). Neither media type, clearly, placed great emphasis on reporting cures to conflict. Caution could

be expected because of the fine line between reporting and editorializing, but reporting on attitudes could receive as much emphasis as reporting on events. Again, headlines show that media types saw solutions to the same conflict quite differently. Following a clash between whites and blacks, the Journal on August 30, 1967 reported the mayor's call for more police power: "Maier Orders 30 Day Ban on Night Demonstrations." However, the Courier on September 2, 1967 made it clear that police were perceived by some as part of the problem, not of the solution: "Marchers attacked by white mob/Claim police burned freedom house."

Table 3 summarizes the results of data on the eight hypotheses. It shows how specialized black media paralleled to a lesser degree the performance of general media in "knowledge of" scales, one through four, and how the performances reversed in "knowledge about" scales, five through eight. These correlations were expected, and are supported.

TABLE 3

MEANS OF SCALES BY MEDIA TYPE

	General media $\bar{X}$	Specialized black media $\bar{X}$	T-value t
"Authority" sources	.91	.19	(t_{445}=9.61)*
Factual information	1.57	1.27	(t_{445}=4.61)*
Individualized causes	.87	.38	(t_{445}=6.13)*
Individualized cures	.48	.13	(t_{445}=5.54)*
"Nonauthority" sources	.22	.94	(t_{445}=9.89)*
Analytical information	.25	.55	(t_{445}=4.88)*
Societal causes	.40	1.09	(t_{445}=9.00)*
Societal cures	.23	.47	(t_{445}=3.81)*

*p<.001

Factor analysis then further identified three significant variables: nonauthority source, individual cause/cure and societal cause/cure (table 4).

TABLE 4

FACTOR LOADINGS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Nonauthority source	-.44	-.23	-.05	-.20	.80	.23	.25	-.05
Individual cause/cure	.12	.22	.49	.65	-.08	-.15	-.11	-.16
Societal cause/cure	-.07	-.33	-.14	-.14	.19	.47	.70	.73

1 = "Authority" sources
2 = Factual information
3 = Individualized causes
4 = Individualized cures
5 = "Nonauthority" sources
6 = Analytical information
7 = Societal causes
8 = Societal cures

Three refined hypotheses derived from factor analysis, and results, are:

H_1: Specialized black media will be more likely to rely on nonauthority sources than will general media.

The Star and Courier were far more likely to rely on nonauthority sources than were the Journal and Sentinel, with normalized factor scores of .49 for specialized black media as compared to -.37 for general media (t_{445}=11.72, $p<.001$). Factor analysis underscores use of sources, especially nonauthority sources, as the most significant difference between general and specialized black media. Again, this disparate use of sources clearly correlates to differences in information --"knowledge"--imparted, and the "knowledge gap" which may have been the result.

H_2: General media will be more likely to contain "knowledge of" and report causes and cures as individual behavior than will specialized black media.

The Journal and Sentinel were more likely to contain factual "knowledge of" racial conflict, simplistically relating causes and cures to individuals, then were the Star and Courier, with factor scores of .16 for general media as compared to -.21 for specialized black media ($t_{445}=5.67$, $p<.001$).

H_3: Specialized black media will be more likely to contain "knowledge about" and report causes and cures as societal behavior than will general media.

The Star and Courier were far more likely to contain analytical "knowledge about" racial conflict, citing complex societal causes and cures, than were the Journal and Sentinel, with factor scores of .27 for specialized black media as compared to -.21 for general media ($t_{445}=6.35$, $p<.001$).

Table 5 summarizes the results of data on the three hypotheses derived from factor analysis. It shows the strong contrasts in general and specialized black media performances, especially in use of sources.

TABLE 5

FACTOR SCORES BY MEDIA TYPE

	General media $\bar{X}$	Specialized black media $\bar{X}$	T-value t
Nonauthority source	-.37	.49	($t_{445}=11.72$)*
Individual cause/cure	.16	-.21	($t_{445}=5.67$)*
Societal cause/cure	-.21	.27	($t_{445}=6.35$)*

*$p<.001$

Discussion and Conclusions

This study does not replicate Tichenor, et al.'s research in conflict and consensus, or answer their concerns on information gain. It cannot, 15 years later. However, content analysis of local racial conflict coverage in 1967 indicates that Milwaukee's general and specialized black media did differ in information imparted, correlating to their reliance on different sources. It shows that racial conflict may be an instance of Tichenor, et al.'s hypothetical inflection point, when communication is dissipated rather than accelerated in accommodation to the intensity of conflict. Other channels may have replaced media. Tichenor, et al. (1973) noted the role of interpersonal communication, and Flaming (1968) found "word of mouth" effective in Milwaukee's inner city. However, if media were the main source of information in Milwaukee in 1967, a "knowledge gap" between black and white Milwaukeeans was the likely result.

In Milwaukee in 1967, general media contained more "knowledge of" while specialized black media contained more "knowledge about" local racial conflict. Readers of the specialized black media were given less information about whites' perspectives than about their own. Readers relying on the general media were given far less information about blacks' perspectives than about their own. Both media types may have reinforced their readers' own attitudes more than they reported other views. Neither general nor specialized black media provided a balance of white and black perspectives approaching journalistic "objectivity." The black papers, however, make clear their particular point of view and propagandizing purpose. The general media claim to serve all segments of society. "Read the Negro press and you suddenly recognize a fact that is taken for granted: the daily press is white" (Roshco, 1967: 9), wrote an observer at the time of Milwaukee's riot. It may still be true. If the findings of this study are valid today, they give direction to general media on

how to compensate for cultural and organizational biases.

The Kerner Commission recommended almost 15 years ago that general media hire more minority newsworkers. The still-small percentages of black reporters and negligible numbers of black "gatekeepers" indicate that the goal of representation cannot soon be realized. Until greater numbers of blacks can gain journalism education and experience, perhaps the goal should not soon be realized. The immediate alternatives are not acceptable: either draining black newspapers of their best personnel or restricting black reporters in general media to the "black beat," just a new form of discrimination in the newsroom.

In the long term, general media need black newsworkers. In the short term, if the findings of this study are valid today, general media need black news sources. Clearly, the specialized black papers are themselves useful sources of black perspectives--"Read the Negro press"--and merit consistent consideration in general media newsrooms. Black papers gain scarcely more readership from white reporters than from whites in general. This seems due to a "double bias," both cultural and professional. Just as black culture is different and makes whites uncomfortable, black journalism is different and makes white journalists uncomfortable. The black press often abandons traditional journalistic "objectivity" as just another password for prejudice, another way of obscuring black persons and black progress. Black weeklies' emphasis on society news, church notes and even tavern talk, for example, is antithetical and outdated to white journalists who may then fail to see the significance of hard news stories.

These measures can compensate for cultural biases and the overriding organizational constraint of reliance on official sources. Regarding other organizational constraints, media have attempted to compensate for "routinizing" and "event-oriented" coverage by increasing analytical stories. These can show

that blacks "act in particular ways for complicated reasons. What they think is important because it explains what they do" (Roshco, 1967: 9). Media are also increasingly aware of implicit "policy" constraints and, since revelations of government infiltrations and activities, are more resistant to officially induced explicit guidelines on coverage.

Scholars of journalism, like practitioners, have given little attention to the black press. This study also gives direction for further research in specialized media. It would be useful to seek a specific inflection point--if such a single incident exists--at which media dissipate rather than accelerate communication in local conflict. This study defines the inflection point as local racial conflict of various types over a seven-month span. Further study could determine the inflection point to have been a specific incident such as, in Milwaukee in 1967, arrests of civil rights leaders or blacks marching into white suburbs, arson of a neighborhood center or urban riot. Further study might also find that media types, or even specific papers within types, reacted to different inflection points. What white Milwaukeeans perceived to be a lawless "riot" may have been the inflection point for general media. However, it may not have been so for specialized black media which were more likely to agree with black Milwaukeeans that the same event was part of the ongoing "struggle for civil rights," as Slesinger (1968) found. Even within Milwaukee's black press, inflection points may have differed since the Star was clearly more activist than the Courier before the 1967 riot, although in months following the Courier modified its attitude of appeasement.

This study could be replicated in many ways, since results point to the significance of reliance on sources and to perceptions of individualized or societal causes and cures for conflict. It could be replicated in another city or with other media, broadcast as well as print, because of improvements in

video storage since 1967. It could be replicated for other minorities and groups, as in comparing Time and Ms. magazines' coverage of Equal Rights Amendment conflict.

However, of immediate urgency is replication of this study in Milwaukee today. Fifteen years after the riot, local racial conflict is still high. An open housing law was passed soon after the 1967 riot, but Milwaukee's housing patterns today make it one of the most segregated cities in the country (Rummler, 1981). Educational opportunities have improved with the end of de facto segregation through neighborhood schools, but Milwaukee's white and black youth are geographically more segregated than their elders (Rummler, 1982). Unemployment in the inner city is breaking all-time records. Calls for better police-community relations echo down the decades, black officers have organized to fight alleged discrimination in the police department, and the national NAACP is investigating recurrent charges of police brutality. Since this study began more than two years ago, an innocent black named Ernest Lacy died while in police custody. General media often present the Lacy case as the result of individual behavior, whether the individuals are blacks or police, while Milwaukee's specialized black media again report it as another instance of broad societal discrimination. The "truth" may be, as it was 15 years ago, somewhere in between.

Replication of this study using coverage of more recent racial conflict, and more recent attitude surveys, could show whether the "knowledge gap" is still widening between social classes, white and black, in Milwaukee. It could also show whether Milwaukee's media, white and black, are helping to keep it that way. Other studies have measured societal and media failure to further communication between blacks and whites. Paletz and Dunn (1967) used content analysis to compare local, state and national coverage by general media of the Winston-Salem, North Carolina riot in 1967. They concluded that general media failed to

accurately transmit blacks' perceptions and attitudes. The result was blacks' frustration due to inability to communicate their discontent, and whites' deception as to the nature and extent of black frustration. The two factors, they concluded, increased the potential danger to the city of Winston-Salem.

This study also uses content analysis to measure media management of social conflict. It also uses riot as an extreme instance. Unlike others, however, this study compares general and specialized black media, and includes coverage of conflict in the months before and after an urban riot. Still, the results and conclusions resemble Paletz and Dunn's, and support the suspicions of Tichenor, et al. The condition of racial conflict in the community did cause the same conflict to be managed in different ways. Reporting on the same events resulted in different stories. This difference in reporting on racial conflict would not have been a problem for readers who had access to both points of view, black and white. However, few did. The majority of Milwaukeeans were not aware of black perspectives before, during and after the riot. The majority relied on the general media.

This study, then, leads to the same conclusion as did Paletz and Dunn's. If black Milwaukeeans were frustrated in communicating their reasons for the racial conflict and riot of 1967, and if white Milwaukeeans were deceived as to the nature and extent of black discontent, then the media may have fostered dangerous discord. It is not a lesson learned too late. Milwaukee today, 15 years after the riot, is still hearing echoes of grievances voiced when its current black leaders were youngsters seeing the inner city in flames. If the majority of Milwaukeeans were deceived by general media--however unintentionally --as to the causes of and cures for riot, they may well be deceived in believing it is a problem far in the past.

Coder: _____

Date: _____

Sunday Journal
daily Journal
Sentinel
Courier
Star

Date: _____ Inches: ____

Section: _____ Page: _____

Rating scale:

0 = no information
1 = some information
2 = more information

	Categories	Sentences 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Sum
1	Attribution to "authority" sources: police, city officials																	
2	Reporting of factual information: who, what, where, when																	
3	Conflict caused by troublemakers: juvenile delinquents, local civil rights workers, nonarea outsiders																	
4	Solution seen as more police power, gun control																	
5	Attribution to "nonauthority" sources: rioters, residents																	
6	Reporting of analytical information: why, how																	
7	Conflict caused by societal troubles: job/housing/school discrimination, poor police/city officials-community relations																	
8	Solution seen as more jobs, better housing, school integration, better police/city officials-community relations																	

9	Story location	
10	Headline size	

Headline: _____

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APPENDIX A

26

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